



Creative Proposal

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Target Audiences

Primary public: Post-secondary students ages 18-25

The students in this public attend any post-secondary school in Manitoba including the University of Winnipeg, the University of Manitoba and Red River College. At each of these schools, there are student groups that cater to fantasy enthusiasts. The majority of these students are on campus playing *Dungeons and Dragons* or meeting outside of class to role-play, according to sources in the live action role-play (LARP) group Wildgard.

More than half of these students live on their own and are making less than \$20,000 a year because they are going to school and can only work part-time. West Broadway is a popular area to live. According to Envionics Analytics, this area is called Grads and Pads because the rent is so cheap and students live here while they attend school.

Due to their level of education, this public enjoys content that is well rounded, thought provoking, and well researched. This group is concerned with being true to the narrative. This can be in novels, in larping, or in tabletop games but whatever it is the fantasy they create has to remain consistent and true to form.

One of the draws for this group is the camaraderie of spending time with like-minded people. These groups provide a place where this public can go and feel no judgment for their interests. Groups in this public can be as small as three to four people playing a D&D game or as large as the 300 people in Wildgard.

Secondary public: Middle class men ages 25-40

This audience spent their childhood without the online activity we see now. They grew up collecting tangible things such as books, cards, action figures and games and had to spend time using their imagination to entertain themselves. These hobbies carried over into their present day lives. They are nostalgic for a “simpler time” and collecting things that allow them to re-live that.

This public likes to hang out at collectible stores like Cobra Collectibles where they can stock up on the latest and greatest in fantasy culture and where they can converse with others who enjoy the same things. These stores provide a sense of community for this public. More than half of these men are single with no children and are looking for a place to connect with others. Some of these shops host game nights for newcomers or for those wishing to find gaming groups. As this public gets older, it becomes harder for gaming groups to stay together because some choose to start families and cannot invest the same amount of time into gaming, so the ones who don't often have to find new gaming groups to join.

This public gets their information from traditional news sources like print newspapers and local TV news programs. They are not as active on social media as the primary public. Their online use is limited to forums, message boards and Facebook. Much like collecting tangible things they like to get their information in a tangible way. This is also done through face-to-face contact with others.

This group influences the primary public because they're older. Role-playing culture started in Europe in the '80s and made its way to North America shortly after. This public was alive to see this happen, so their knowledge of the culture is much larger than the primary public's. The primary public was the group that brought nerd culture into the mainstream. To remain true to the narrative, the primary public has to consult this secondary public to ensure that any changes to games makes sense and is in order with what the original game intended.

Role is a magazine for fantasy fans and role-play gamers in Manitoba. Whether Sundays means LARPing at Assiniboine park or watching the newest episode of *Game of Thrones*, there's a fantasy fan in all of us. Role is a print publication that's also a collector's item.

To continue the legs of Role, we will feature a different Manitoban fantasy group every spring issue. We're a biannual publication, so this will keep our readers awaiting the newest spring issue. For the next issue, we will feature River City Jedi, a martial arts inspired group that uses lightsabers for combat.

Our events calendar will be a staple. Role will be the go-to source for what group is having events when. Events will range from LARPing at Assiniboine Park on Sundays to Central Canada Comic Con's (C4) weekend in Winnipeg.

We will host contests like posting your outfit on Twitter and Instagram with our magazine's hashtag "#rolemag." The costume contest and winners will be featured in the next issue.

We will continue a column in each issue. Our next column will investigate female fantasy costumes. This piece will have currency as our fall issue comes out a month before Halloween.

Although our focus is on Manitoba's fantasy groups, we believe it would be interesting to write about other LARPing or cosplaying groups around the world. There's potential for pieces specifically on Nordic LARPing groups (because that's where LARPing began, according to larping.org). We could also do a piece on zombie cosplay groups in an upcoming fall issue to time well with zombie walks held in the fall like the Global Zombie Walk or The Winnipeg Zombie Walk.

C4's weekend in Winnipeg also offers article opportunities. Prominent actors like Laura Vandervoort and Ron Perlman are in town, so we will try to arrange interviews or attend pressers to collect quotes for a story. Regardless, we will photograph locals in their cosplay outfits and feature them in a spread every fall issue.

To promote Role, we will use a combination of tactics to gain name recognition and increase sales.

We will host a Twitter and Instagram contest, encouraging users to upload and tag our social media accounts in photos of their LARP or cosplay costumes. We will announce the winners of the costume contest at the magazine trade fair. The costumes will be judged at the trade fair by Chadwick Ginther and Alyssa Thiessen, two authors we interviewed for a story in the first issue of Role. The top three best dressed will win prize packs: third place will win a one-year subscription to Role and a gift card to Imagine Games and Hobbies; second place will win a one-year subscription to Role and two weekend passes to the C4 event Wonderland Festival on April 11 and 12; first place will win a one-year subscription to Role, two weekend passes to C4 and two passes to Wonderland Festival.

To get the message out about our contest and the magazine trade fair, we will collaborate with River City Jedi to perform a flashmob-style, choreographed combat with volunteer Jedi members at The Forks one week before the launch.

Our team will send out personalized pitch emails to Jon Hendricks from CTV News, Tamara Forlanski from Global News and Tracy Koga from go!Winnipeg about one week before the flashmob happens. The email will include the date and time of the flashmob, the groups behind it (River City Jedi and primarily Role) and focus on how local, bizarre and timely the tournament is.

We will use the magazine trade fair in April 2015 for Role's launch. The launch will feature all day, interactive fantasy-related events. This will include a LARPing demonstration from Wildgard, beginner and advanced games of D&D, a book signing with a question and answer section by Chadwick Ginther and Alyssa Thiessen and the costume contest winner announcement, promoted through Twitter and Instagram.

Our magazine will rely on a business model that combines sales and advertising to cover production costs.

We believe this to be a realistic model because D&D handbooks, among other gaming texts, cost anywhere from \$10 to \$30, according to chapters.indigo.ca. To offset the rest of the costs, we will sell full and half page advertising spots to companies that fit our brand like Cobra Collectibles and Across the Board.

Potential advertisers:

- Microplay Video Games
- Songza
- PNP Games
- Stitch City Tailor
- Etsy
- Bison Books
- McNally Robinson Booksellers
- Chapters
- Across The Board Café
- Turnstone Press
- Domino's Pizza

Compared to other magazines, our ad costs are quite low because we are a brand new publication with a relatively small readership. The cost of ads will increase as the readership and circulation increases. The rate card below is based on the industry standard found across different styles of magazines including *Canadian Living*.

FULL COLOUR AD SIZE	ONE ISSUE	TWO ISSUES	FOUR ISSUES
Outside Cover (8.5" x 11")	\$300	\$550	\$1025
Inside Cover (8.5" x 11")	\$280	\$520	\$1000
Full Page (8.5" x 11")	\$150	\$225	\$400
2/3 Page (8.5" x 7")	\$120	\$190	\$370
1/2 Page (8.5" x 5.5")	\$100	\$175	\$350
1/3 Page (8.5" x 3.5")	\$80	\$150	\$290
Double Page (11" x 17")	\$300	\$550	\$1025
Business Card (2" x 3.5")	\$75	\$145	\$280

CIRCULATION: 1500 copies

FREQUENCY: Every 6 months – spring and fall issues

MAX RETAIL PRICE: \$12

TARGET AUDIENCES: Post-secondary fantasy fans ages 18-30 and middle class men ages 25-40

Role has a large potential market in Manitoba. In 2014, The Winnipeg Sun reported Central Canada Comic Con (C4) was expected to bring in 40,000 people. This audience only includes those who could afford C4 tickets. As a new magazine, Role would be priced around \$15. Our team believes this is a reasonable price for a quality product in an untapped Manitoban market.

There are also many other LARPing and cosplaying groups and events in Manitoba like Wildgard, River City Jedi, Zombie Survival Camp and Swords and Sabres. These groups and events are active throughout the year, so our magazine will remain relevant.

To bring the magazine to our audiences, we'll host competitions to win free subscriptions. We will also approach local stores like Cobra Collectibles and GameKnight Games and Cool Stuff and offer a lower rate for advertising if they agree to carry our magazine in-store.

Every autumn, we will set up a booth at C4, promoting our magazine and its local content. Booths are costly, but a lot of our strategies involve Cobra Collectibles, the owner of which is a promoter for C4. We'd be willing to pay for a booth, but would approach Michael Paille in advance in hopes of getting a lowered price in return for our past collaboration.

We will also approach book stores like McNally Robinson Booksellers, Chapters and Bison Books to carry our magazine, emphasizing its local focus.

Role will have an official website with a PDF of the current edition available for download for subscribers only. We will have interactive pages and a contemporary design, with a blog and an opportunity to sign up for a monthly newsletter.

Role's online presence and social media accounts will have a similar layout and design to the magazine. Differentiating from the magazine, Role's website will have more interactive content and opportunities to connect its audience with the brand.

The website will feature a weekly poll, a bi-monthly column, a Role message board and links to Role's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. Each physical copy will also direct readers to the website with promoting online-only content and a QR code.